

Business Crime Prevention

Programs, Presentations and Services

BUSINESS CRIME WATCH - Businesses in the same area can form a Business Crime Watch to work together to prevent and reduce crime. Periodic meetings can be held to address common issues and problems, improve communication, exchange information, learn about different crime prevention topics etc.

BUSINESS SECURITY INSPECTION - A Crime Prevention Specialist will inspect your business and prepare a detailed written security assessment. The inspection is designed to reduce burglary, robbery, shoplifting, internal theft and vandalism.

CHECK PRINT PROGRAM - In order to deter check fraud and forgery and to assist law enforcement in apprehending and prosecuting people that commit check-related crimes, the Rocklin Police Department recommends that businesses obtain a thumbprint from people who write personal checks to pay for merchandise or services rendered. The Check Print Program provides businesses with special forms, identification requirements and guidelines, and one inkpad to obtain thumbprints.

ROBBERY PREVENTION AND RESPONSE TRAINING - A Crime Prevention Specialist will meet with management and employees to discuss ways to reduce the likelihood of a robbery, and address how to respond if a robbery should occur.

SHOPLIFTING PREVENTION PRESENTATION - A Crime Prevention Specialist will discuss ways to deter shoplifting, legal and safety issues concerning shoplifting arrests, and typical shoplifting profiles, characteristics and methodology.

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND RESPONSE PRESENTATION - A Crime Prevention Specialist will offer insight into recognizing potential workplace violence perpetrators and situations, and enacting policies and procedures to reduce and respond to workplace violence.

Business Security Checklist

The following is an alphabetical list of suggestions that may help to improve the safety and security of your business. Although the list is long, the time you spend to address these issues will be well worth your effort.

Implementing crime prevention measures is similar to putting together a large jigsaw puzzle. Every element or piece you leave out creates a small, but noticeable, gap. These small gaps can create easy and attractive opportunities for criminals, so it is important to eliminate as many gaps as possible.

If you have any questions about this list or need more information, please contact Rocklin Police Community Programs Coordinator Mike Nottoli by telephone at (916) 625-5416 or by email at michaeln@ci.rocklin.ca.us.

ADDRESS – Make sure the address of your business is visible to police officers, firefighters and customers. Address numbers should be at least 10" tall and should contrast in color from the surface they are mounted on. They should also be located near a light or be back-lighted.

ALARM SYSTEMS – Your business should be protected by an alarm system. Advertise that you have an alarm by installing signs, stickers, etc. Criminals are less likely to select a business that is alarmed. Some alarm systems ring loudly (audible alarm) when an intrusion occurs, and others are silent (silent alarms). Some alarm systems have microphones installed inside the business making it possible for the alarm company to monitor activity during an actual burglary. Robbery alarms and manually activated panic alarms can also be installed at various locations inside your business. Employees should be trained to handle false alarm and alarm malfunction incidents.

BURGLARY – If a burglary does occur, do not enter the building! Remember that the burglar may still be inside. Call the police department from a safe location and wait for officers to arrive to check your business. Do not open your business because employees and customers may destroy valuable evidence.

CAMERAS – Well-placed and well-maintained security cameras can deter would-be criminals and "capture" actual criminals on tape. Pay special attention to lighting concerns and the camera's ability to get a clear picture of a face or (depending on the camera's location) a vehicle license plate. The tapes need to be changed regularly to maintain clarity.

CASH – Do not keep large amounts of cash inside the business. Cash and other valuables should be stored in a safe that is secured to the structure. If your business has a cash register, keep it up front in a visible location. Empty the cash drawer when you close and leave the drawer open so a burglar won't be tempted to see if there is something inside. The cash register should also be secured to the counter top. Consider posting a "cash control policy" at the front of the business (i.e., "clerk cannot open safe"). Do not allow large amounts of cash to accumulate in cash registers during business hours. Make regular deposits into a "drop safe" or similar device.

CODES – Alarm codes and other passwords should be changed periodically and immediately after an employee quits or is terminated.

COMPUTERS – Computers and office equipment are often prime targets for burglars. Whenever possible, keep computers away from windows where they are visible to people outside and where they can be grabbed if a window is smashed. Secure computers to countertops with special mounting brackets and/or security cables. Make sure to periodically back up whatever is stored on computers and store the back-up disk or system in a safe place.

CUSTODIAL STAFF – Make sure your custodial staff is trustworthy and reliable. Background checks should be conducted on all employees, especially custodial staff. Special emphasis needs to be placed on keeping all entrances and exits closed and locked during cleaning procedures. This can be an opportune time for a burglar to enter your building. Vacuuming and cleaning can often cover the sound of a door opening and closing, so doors need to be kept locked.

CUSTOMERS – Customers who attempt to wander through unauthorized areas of your business need to be verbally controlled and diverted to customer-appropriate areas. Customers need to be treated in a friendly manner and should know that they are being “paid attention to”. A friendly greeting and eye contact goes along way to reducing crime and improving customer relations.

CRIME WATCH – Businesses in the same area can form a Business Crime Watch to work as a team to prevent and reduce crime. Periodic meetings can be held to address common issues, criminal activity, learn about different crime prevention topics and techniques, improve business communication, etc. Contact the Rocklin Police Crime Prevention Unit at 625-5416 if you are interested in setting up a Business Crime Watch in your area.

DELIVERIES – Deliveries need to be monitored and controlled. This task should be controlled by a reliable employee.

DOGS AND BARKING DOG ALARMS – Depending on the type and location of your business, guard dogs may be an option. Guard dogs do present liability, care, treatment and maintenance issues. A less expensive option that should not cause your business to incur any liability, is a barking dog alarm. These alarms are available for approximately \$100 and operate by sensing motion through doors, walls and windows. When motion occurs, the alarm “barks and growls” like a ferocious dog to deter would-be intruders.

DOORS – Doors need to be locked and secured when the business is closed. Doors should have “springs” or other closing devices to make sure they do not remain “ajar”. Deadbolts should be utilized, plates should be used to cover locking mechanisms, and hinges should be non-removable or protected. Side and rear doors that are not normally used, should be secured so they cannot be opened from the outside (but can still be used as emergency/fire exits). A door chime, bell or enunciator can be installed on doors to alert you when someone enters or leaves.

DUMPSTERS – Pay attention to what goes into your dumpster. Dishonest employees sometimes deposit items in dumpsters during business hours and come back later (or have their friends come back) when the business is closed to retrieve them. Sensitive documents, materials, computer parts, etc., should be shredded/destroyed before being discarded. Consider locking trash containers after hours to prevent theft of information and illegal dumping. Dumpsters should not be placed too close to a structure because they can easily be used as a “climbing tool” to gain access to a roof or window. A trash container fire can also endanger a structure if it is too close.

EMPLOYEES – Employees should be trained and made aware of the importance of building security. New employees should be background-checked. Employees need to greet customers and keep unauthorized people out of restricted areas.

ENTRANCE / EXIT POLICIES – Make sure employees and customers are directed to enter and exit through one main entrance. This minimizes employee theft, unauthorized entry during regular hours, and doors being left ajar.

GLASS AND WINDOWS – Glass areas can be protected with security glazing, wire mesh, polycarbonate panels, or protective grills (check with the Fire Department to

make sure you comply with Fire Code issues; inside release levers are available to provide escape routes during fires/emergencies requiring quick evacuation). All windows should be locked when the business is closed.

HEIGHT MARKER STRIPS – These small plastic strips can be mounted on the door frames of all exits. They can help employees and cameras determine the height of a criminal when he/she leaves the building.

KEY CONTROL – Limit access to sensitive areas. Place keys in the care of your most responsible employees. In most businesses, not everyone needs to have a key. Engrave “Do Not Duplicate” on all keys, and keep an accurate log of who the keys are issued to. If an employee quits or is terminated, it is prudent to have the locks re-keyed.

LANDSCAPING – The area around your business and parking lot should be free of landscaping that obstructs the view of the business or provides places for criminals to hide. Bushes and shrubs should always be kept lower than window level to allow for visibility, and should also be trimmed up from the ground level to reveal persons who may try to hide behind them. Entrances and exits should not have any tall bushes or shrubs nearby. Trees should be trimmed so they do not block overhead lighting, or provide access to the roof or windows.

LIGHTING – Lighting is an excellent crime deterrent. Light up all dark areas, especially around doors and windows. High-pressure sodium lighting provides a large amount of light while keeping electrical bills down. It is especially good for external and perimeter lighting. While not typically as bright, fluorescent lighting is also effective and economical (especially for inside lighting applications). Mount exterior lighting high enough so criminals cannot easily reach the fixtures. Cover the bulb area with a protective cover to reduce vandalism and intentional light sabotage by burglars. Consider using motion sensor lights to startle potential criminals or to alert others of someone lurking in an area.

MERCHANDISE – Arrange merchandise inside the business so it does not restrict visibility. Merchandise and equipment displayed near doors should be the least valuable. Keep valuable items locked in display cases. Think about how displaying items can help or hinder a criminal. For example, expensive clothing items can be displayed with the hangers being alternated to prevent multiple items from being removed at the same time.

MIRRORS – Mirrors can be used to improve visibility in blind corners, high counters, hallways, etc. This can deter shoplifting and burglary.

OPENING AND CLOSING – It is recommended that two or more employees be present during opening and closing times. Whenever possible, a visual perimeter check should be done as you arrive (driving around the building), and a physical check should be conducted at closing time to make sure all windows and doors are locked, and merchandise is properly stored inside.

OPERATION IDENTIFICATION – Valuable property inside your business should be inventoried and identified. Office equipment and other valuables should be engraved with a California Drivers License number. The make, model, type of item, value and description should also be recorded. Special Operation Identification forms are

available at no charge at the Rocklin Police Department. Engravers may also be borrowed from the Rocklin Police Department at no charge. You should also take photographs and/or make a videotape of your valuables.

PADLOCKS – Padlocks that utilize keys are better than combination locks. Use sturdy padlocks that are case-hardened and that don't release the key until the padlock is closed. The American 700 series padlock is a good lock.

PARKING LOT – Parking lot safety and security should be a concern of every business. The safety of your employees and company vehicles, as well as your customers and their vehicles, can be greatly influenced by what you do or don't do. A properly landscaped and lighted parking lot can make a big difference. Parking stalls in the front of a business are generally safer than those in the rear. Whenever possible, company vehicles should be separated from customer vehicles and parked in a gated area. Parking lot security cameras and security guards can offer additional protection. Depending on the situation, an escort program for employees and customers who leave the business may be warranted.

PERSONAL ITEMS – Criminals frequently steal purses, wallets, laptop computers, etc., from employee work areas during regular business hours. Employees should keep their valuables locked in their desks or with them at all times. Valuable personal items should never be left unattended after regular business hours.

PHONE NUMBERS – Telephone numbers for police and fire departments should be posted in a prominent place next to telephones. Confidential employee phone lists should not be left where they can easily be lost or stolen.

PHYSICAL BARRIERS – When possible, counters, swinging doors and signs should be used to keep customers and potential criminals from wandering into unauthorized areas. The type and size of physical barriers will depend upon the nature of the business and the amount of security needed. Barriers can take many forms. Cement or metal posts can be used to prevent vehicles from ramming an area, bullet-proof glass can protect employees from gunfire, and a simple metal rail can direct customers to certain areas.

ROBBERY – Employees should be trained to know how to respond during a robbery. A well-trained staff can minimize the risk of injury during such an incident. The Rocklin Police Department offers training for employees in robbery prevention and response.

ROOF HATCHES – Burglars have been known to "drop in" via unlocked roof hatches. It is recommended that roof hatches be locked from the inside with a good quality padlock. Skylights should be covered with protective grating or metal bars.

SECURITY GUARDS – On-site security guards can deter and detect burglars and other criminals. Because these services may be cost-restrictive, neighboring businesses may consider teaming up with the property manager or owner to hire on-site security.

SHOPLIFTING – Shoplifting and “open business burglary” incidents can create the potential for confrontations to occur between employees and criminals. Employees should be trained in handling these types of incidents.

TRESPASSING ISSUES – You may post “no trespassing or loitering” signs to discourage transients, loiterers and potential criminals from hanging around your business. Consult the Rocklin Police Department Crime Prevention Unit at 625-5416 for sign wording and recommendations.

VISIBILITY – Make sure the front of your business is not covered with banners, signs, or advertisements that limit visibility in and out of the structure. When possible, do not store valuable items near windows where criminals can see them.